

Remarks

Claim 8, the sole independent claims in this application has been amended in order to more particularly distinguish Applicants' invention over the prior art cited by the Examiner.

Claim 13 has been cancelled and thus the objection to this claim by the Examiner under 37 CFR 1.75 (c) is avoided.

The rejection of remaining claims 8-10 and 14 under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over newly cited US Patent 5,148,644 to Weir in view of US Patent 6,295,781 to Thompson, is respectfully traversed.

Weir is directed to the prevention of collection of water between the contacting surfaces of wood members in e.g. wood deck assemblies using preformed strips of extruded rubber or plastic flashing. In this regard Weir is essentially identical to the admitted prior art flashing shown in Figure 1 of Applicants' drawings and discussed at page 3, lines 16-26 of Applicants' specifications. Weir's only contribution to this admitted prior use of flashing is to employ a specially-configured, complicated and expensive extruded flashing.

As discussed in Applicants' specification at the bottom of page 3 and the top of page 4, the present invention is directed at solving a different problem, that is the prevention of corrosion of steel connectors, specifically metal joist hangers used in wooden constructions which employ the newer copper-containing wood preservatives. Applicants' invention is directed at preventing or minimizing galvanic corrosion caused by direct contact between wood containing such new preservatives and the metal joist hangers.

As fully described in Applicants' specification and the presently amended claims, such direct contact is prevented by the use of a pressure sensitive adhesive waterproof membrane barrier at the locations where the pretreated wood contacts the metal hanger. The self-sealing nature of the waterproof adhesive additionally prevents intrusion of water into the nail holes formed by nails used to hold the wood construction together.

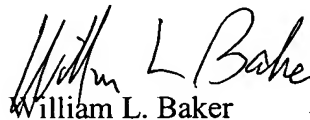
Neither Weir nor Thompson mentions the above problem solved by the present invention, much less an awareness of the problem. Further, as admitted by the Examiner,

Weir does not disclose his wood members as being pretreated, a barrier material that is pressure-sensitive adhesive, nor even the use of metal joist hangers. The fact that Thompson shows the use of such hangers in wood structure adds nothing of an anticipatory nature to the Examiners' rejection. Applicants admit that the use of joist hangers is per se known in wooden deck construction. Applicants' invention on the other hand is directed to a solution to a problem occurring when the new pretreated woods are used in combination with metal joist hangers, wherein a simple, low-cost, pressure-sensitive adhesive waterproofing membrane barrier is used to prevent contact between such wood and hanger. Neither Weir nor Thompson remotely suggest an awareness of such a problem, much less Applicants' solution.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant earnestly requests the issuance of a formal Notice of Allowance.

Respectfully submitted,



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